**Introduction to Education in Ancient Rome**

**Education during the monarchy:**

In the early days, when Rome was a kingdom, kids ***did not*** go to school.  Education took place in the home and was done by the family.  If a family had someone who knew how to read and write, the boys were taught how.  They were also taught how to be warriors.  Finally, they were taught how to manage the farm or business and how to behave in society.  All this teaching was done by other males in the household.

Girls were taught by the females in the household.  They were taught how to run a household and how to be a good wife.

If they could afford it the family might hire a tutor to teach math and oration, but mostly the teaching was by the family.

**Education during the republic:**

**Education changed during the republic.**  The Romans saw how the Greeks taught their children using paid teachers to educate groups of students.  The Romans figured that this was a pretty good system so they adopted it.  However, school was not free.  You had to pay the teacher, so poor children still did not go to school.

Teachers taught more than just reading and writing.  They also taught math and Greek literature.  But the main subject was Oration or public speaking. **The goal of education in ancient Rome was to be an effective speaker.**

School started before sunrise with students working using candles or oil lamps.  They took a break for lunch and siesta, then worked again until late afternoon.

**Literacy in Ancient Rome:** You may have heard that the ancient Romans could not read or write. Actually, the ancient Romans wrote quite a bit. Much of their pottery was signed. Very often, the bricks used to make buildings were stamped with their maker’s name. Lead pipes leading to these buildings, by law, were stamped. Scholars have found 200,000 Latin inscriptions and, incredibly, several thousands are still being found every year! From a stash of letters preserved by being waterlogged from being dumped in a well in Scotland, it would appear that some men in the regular Roman army could read and write. Scholarly estimates are at around 30% of all adult men in ancient Rome had the ability to read and write. That’s a lot, considering school was not free.